

## UPPER TEN MILE CREEK MINING AREA

Near Helena, Montana, Lewis and Clark County  
Congressional District - At Large  
EPA ID# MTD SFN7578012



March 2005

### ABOUT THE UPPER TEN MILE CREEK MINING AREA SITE . . .

EPA added the Upper Ten mile Creek Mining Area to the Superfund National Priorities List on October 22, 1999, due to mining waste problems in the 53 square mile watershed. The small historic mining community of Rimini is located within the Superfund Site boundaries. Contaminants of concern are heavy metals, primarily lead, copper and zinc, as well as arsenic. These contaminants pose potential risks to public health and the environment.

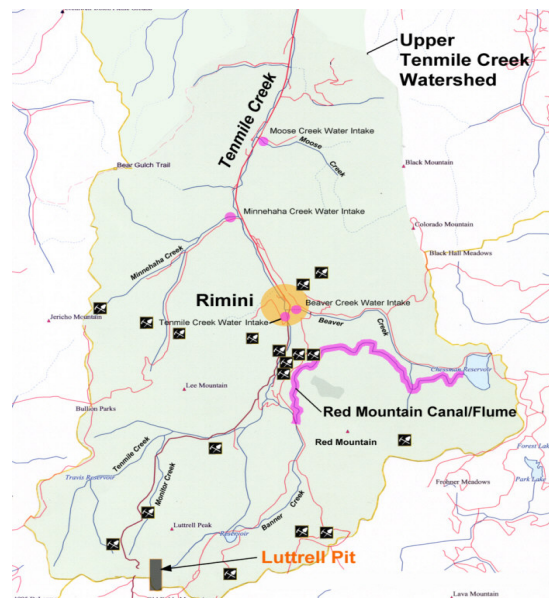
### BACKGROUND

The Upper Ten mile Creek Mining Area site is located in the Rimini Mining District, southwest of Helena, Montana, and consists of numerous abandoned and inactive hard rock mine sites that produced gold, lead, zinc, and copper. Mining began in the Rimini Mining District before 1870 and continued through the 1920s. Little mining has been performed in the Rimini Mining District since the early 1930s. The site boundary includes the drainage basin of Ten mile Creek upstream of the Helena Water Treatment Plant and includes tributaries that supply water to the plant's five intake pipelines. EPA identified 150 individual mine sites within the watershed boundary, of which 70 have been prioritized for clean-up. Many of these mine features are above the five City of Helena drinking water intakes which supply over 70 percent of the city's water.

### RECENT HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1999 - Residents and others meet with EPA to request cleanup of mining wastes. EPA lists Site on the Superfund National Priorities List. Removal begins of high priority areas.

2000/2001- EPA completes the clean up the high priority areas (Red Mountain, Bunker Hill, Susie Peerless/Jenney/King and part of the Upper Valley Forge Mine sites). EPA begins Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study. Results show high levels of arsenic and/or lead pose a risk to human health in most residential yards in Rimini and several properties in the Landmark subdivision. Most well water in Rimini is contaminated. EPA provides point-of-use water systems,



evaluates alternatives for cleanup and identifies a preferred alternative.

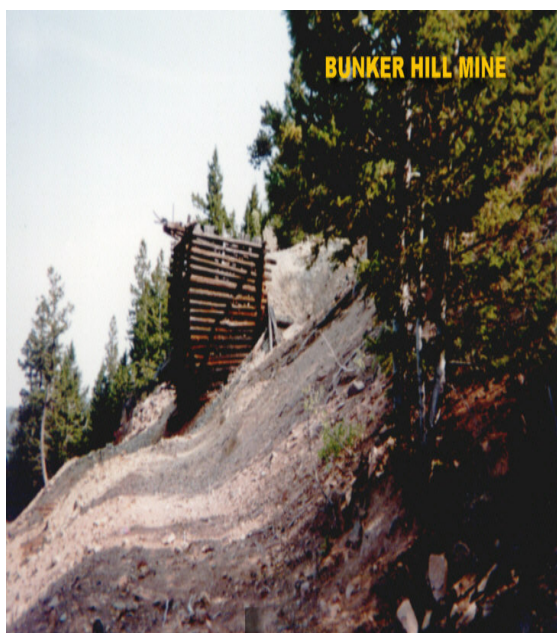
2002 - EPA and Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) sign an Record of Decision (ROD) specifying that cleanup will include removal of the contaminated soils and mine waste and disposal in the Luttrell Repository. Cleanup will also include construction of new water and wastewater systems for Rimini. EPA and the Forest Service continue mine waste removals.

2003 - EPA begins cleanup of residential yards in Landmark Subdivision and water removal at the Lee Mountain Mine Site. Rimini water and sewer systems must be installed before residential yard cleanup begins. Wastes around home will be cleanup before working on remote waste sites.

2004 - EPA completed cleanup of Landmark Subdivision properties, began designing the water and wastewater system and continued its search for a potable water supply for the community. 49,000 cubic yards of waste material were disposed of in the Luttrell Repository. Two of the cells (1,2) of the Repository are full and were closed in 2004.

To date, 348,000 cubic yards of waste from the Bunker Hill/Ten mile, Red Mountain, and Suzie mines in the Ten Mile watershed and the Buckeye/Enterprise, Bullion and Crystal mines in the adjoining Basin Creek watershed have been safely stored in the Luttrell Repository.

EPA has received funding for 2005 to finalize designs for the water and wastewater system, develop a potable water source for the community of Rimini, lay the water and sewer lines along the Rimini road as part of road cleanup. The community has expressed interest in a Technical Assistance Grant and hiring a Technical Advisor.



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### LEANUP APPROACH

The Upper Ten Mile Site is being cleaned up using a collaborative, watershed approach. To date, EPA has been unable to identify a potentially responsible party so the cleanup is being paid for with Federal funds. Cooperating agencies have combined resources to expedite a watershed cleanup. The U.S. Forest Service has taken the lead role in cleaning up wastes on its property within the Superfund Site boundary (Beatrice, Justice and Armstrong Mines). Where individual mines involve both Federal and private lands (Upper Valley Forge Mine), cleanup expenses are shared by EPA and the Forest Service. EPA and the Forest Service also share construction and maintenance costs of a joint mine waste repository. Throughout the cleanup, EPA continues to work closely with the Forest Service, State and local community.

EPA staff are coordinating with other state and federal agencies by addressing Clean Water Act problems related to mining wastes in the watershed that have been identified by the State. Ten Mile Creek is a priority for the State's Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) allocation.

In addition to its own periodic meetings, site fact sheets, and other activities, EPA participates in monthly meetings of the Upper Ten Mile Watershed Group in order to inform the affected communities and the appropriate agencies of EPA's progress.

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On the Web:  
[www.epa.gov/region08/superfund/sites/mt/10mile.html](http://www.epa.gov/region08/superfund/sites/mt/10mile.html)